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Future Foreign Language Teachers’ Intercultural Competence

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Future Foreign Language Teachers’
Intercultural Competence

Andrew Baalerud

A Thesis Proposal Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of
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Abstract

There is a lack of research regarding the implications for foreign language study and intercultural competence. Scholars suggest that foreign language proficiency plays a role in cultivating intercultural competence, but agree that there is a lack of empirical evidence supporting this notion. Research also shows that foreign language teachers are ethnocentric. Many educators and foreign language programs use a framework developed by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Language (ACTFL) to promote language learning. This framework also possesses key elements in promoting intercultural competence. This study addressed whether a pre-service, ACTFL-guided teaching component of the curriculum had an influence on the intercultural competence of seven student teachers from a master’s large institution in the Midwestern U.S. The intercultural competence was scored using the Cross Cultural Adaptability Inventory as an assessment tool. The findings revealed no significant differences in their levels, but did find differences in how the correlations within intercultural competence’s different dimensions interconnected. The conclusions indicate connections to student development theory and recommendations for further study.
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Chapter 1: Introduction

Problem Statement

This study addresses the lack of research pertaining to future K-12 foreign language teachers’ (FFLT) intercultural competence. Past studies have identified foreign language teachers as ethnocentric and essentially lacking intercultural competence (DeJaeghere & Cao, 2009; Mahon, 2009; Wright, 2000; Yuen, 2010). Perhaps, as empirical evidence suggests, foreign language teachers have not placed enough emphasis on the cultural dimensions of intercultural competence (Byram & Guilherme, 2000; Yuen, 2010). However, scholars of intercultural competence still assert that foreign language proficiency is crucial to developing intercultural competence (Deardorff, 2006), but data to support this hypothesis remains elusive (Savignon & Sysoyev, 2005).

Traditional foreign language teaching practices focused primarily on linguistic proficiency (Reeser, 2003). However, the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) emphasizes a more holistic approach stemming from the National Standards of 1999 (Reeser, 2003). Today, ACTFL (2012) oversees the integration of intercultural components into foreign language program (FLP) curricula and claim over 12,000 members from K-12 and college educators, to government and industry officials. FFLTs are often instructed with a pedagogy grounded in ACFTL’s standards, while receiving training in developing their own teaching philosophies that encompass ACTFL’s components. Furthermore, the Modern Language Association (2007) alleged that implementing cultural knowledge and linguistic competence is critical if one wishes to understand people and their communities; a key intercultural competence component (Stier, 2006). FFLTs could be exceptional examples of how modern language programs
help students develop intercultural communication skills. Therefore, research is needed to gauge whether an ACTFL-guided curriculum for teacher preparation impacts FFLT’s intercultural competence.

**Importance and Rationale of Research**

The swell of globalization has prompted many higher education institutions to internationalize their academic and campus programming designs. This is not a new phenomenon, but is rather a supplemental piece that is receiving more attention in academia over the past few decades (Altbach & Knight, 2007). As higher education continues to increase its participation in internationalization, the necessity for assessing this initiative is crucial. Thus, scholars and practitioners have begun seeking effective assessment methods for campus programs and curricula that include global learning aspects (Deardorff, 2004). Today, these types of campus-based internationalization initiatives include several components, such as study abroad and stronger foreign language instruction (Siaya & Hayward, 2003). However, despite the growing need for foreign language education, schools at every level continue making financial cuts to FLPs (Skorton & Altschuler, 2012). If research does not identify tangible benefits to participate in and fund FLPs, the modern language content area might continue to dwindle and U.S. citizens’ opportunities to learn multiple languages in formal educational settings may continue to decline.

Today, teachers are challenged to adapt to globalization and the shifting educational objectives for future generations. In order to meet these goals, they must meet the demands of our society within their content and by teaching outside of the curriculum (Hargreaves, 2003; Kienle & Loyd, 2005). Political figures such as the past
Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) director, Leon Panetta and the U.S. Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan have pressed the importance of expanding foreign language programs in the U.S. in order to promote intercultural communication (Panetta, 1999; U.S. Department of Education, 2010). However, research appears to indicate that these goals are not being met. According to Hargreaves (2003), teachers are not only expected to address the demands of society through curricula, but commit to personal development as well. Scholars have found that foreign language teachers lack intercultural competence and are portrayed as ethnocentric (DeJaeghere & Cao, 2009; Mahon, 2009; Wright, 2000; Yuen, 2010). Additionally, research shows that U.S. citizens often lack foreign language communication skills and proficiency in languages other than English (Block & Cameron, 2002; Panetta, 1999; Skorton & Altschuler, 2012).

Conversely, other scholars suggest that learning a foreign language may effectively encourage intercultural awareness. According to Byram, Esarte-Sarries, Nichols, Stevens, and Osborn (2000, as cited in Kubota, 2003):

Learning a foreign language enables learners to understand a culture, worldview, and unique way of life that are different from their own, helping reduce ethnocentrism and stereotypes. While this view associates cultural diversity with the target language and culture, the same issues can be addressed within the culture and classroom in which foreign language learners are situated. Foreign language study should enable students to critically understand their native culture and its underlying ideologies. (p. 12)

Foreign language education also encompasses a cultural understanding that drives global awareness (“Partnership for 21st Century Skills,” 2011) and works cohesively with the
objective of achieving cross-cultural appreciation in U.S. schools (Savignon & Sysoyev, 2005).

Foreign language educators play a vital role in language learning, and higher education has historically answered societal requests (Kienle & Loyd, 2005). FFLT preparation programs often encompass additional pre-service courses. These ensure are guided by ACTFL’s (2012) framework to help ensure that student teachers are meeting the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) (2008) standards. NCATE (2008) expects future educators to comprehend the impact of discrimination and contextualize teaching to students’ specific cultures. ACTFL (2012) integrates an intercultural competence component through its 5 Cs. Assessing the intercultural competence of FFLTs with non-teaching foreign language majors and minors (NTFLMs) could provide insight as to whether ACTFL’s guidelines are promoting intercultural learning in FLPs. Effectively, if foreign language study has the potential to increase one’s intercultural competence, the ACTFL components could provide greater insight on how to modify curricula and programs to effectively increase intercultural competence in foreign language students. Additionally, this study could provide evidence that supports an increase in FLPs by directly connecting their impact to intercultural competence, and eventually an increasingly international and globalized economy.

Background of Problem

The definition of a liberal education has traditionally included the study of foreign languages (Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986). Thus, institutions across the United States have incorporated foreign language learning into their mission, vision, and values as a means of increasing intercultural awareness (Koning, 2010). International activities have
also been included in curriculum and co-curricular programming for many years at higher education institutions to supplement a liberal education (Altbach & Knight, 2007).

According to Siaya and Hayward (2003), FLPS are crucial aspects of internationalization initiatives. However, support for FLPS in K-12 and higher education in the U.S., continue to decline due to lack of funding (Center for Applied Linguistics, 2010; as cited in the Dillon, 2010; Field, 2011; Rosenbusch & Jensen, 2004).

Nevertheless, the U.S.’s lack of support for foreign language learning and lack of proficiency is not a recent development. Dating as far back as the early 1900’s, scholars have criticized the U.S. education system and its inability to effectively support native languages or the multilingual tradition of the nation (Zimmerman, 2002). Throughout the rest of the century, foreign language education in the U.S. was a response to whichever government was coming to power (Girouard, 2003). For example, Girouard (2003) notes that after the Soviet Union launched Sputnik in the 1950’s, the “National Defense Education bolstered language study in this nation such as nothing else before” (p. 188), and schools began increasing foreign language study in languages which typically had not been emphasized, such as Russian (Rifkin, 2005).

Over 50 years later, the impact of globalization has continued to pressure the U.S. to encourage foreign language learning. According to Leon Panetta (1999), “globalization and internationalization will be the hallmarks of diplomatic, military, economic and social policy” (p. 1). With the inevitable effect of globalization, it is important that higher education institutions be prepared to accommodate this change. As employers begin to expect a higher level of cultural competence to compete in a global
marketplace, students will come to realize the magnitude of knowing a foreign language and the values of an intercultural experience (Kienle & Loyd, 2005).

ACTFL developed five standards for foreign language: Communication, Cultures, Connections, Comparisons, and Communities (ACTFL, 2012). ACTFL provides a concise explanation of the culture standard: students are to show an understanding “between the practices and perspectives of the cultures studied and between the products and perspectives of the cultures studied” (Reeser, 2003, p. 772). Reeser (2003) further explained that the objective of these standards is to examine the abstract concepts of culture: “its values, beliefs, attitudes, and ideas and the tangible and intangible aspects of a culture produced by (and in turn producing) that world-view” (p. 772). ACTFL’s (Language Testing International, 2012) assessment tool, the Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI), measures how well a person speaks a language, but it does not assess intercultural competence. According to Guilherme (2000; as cited in Skopinskaja, 2009), intercultural competence is the ability to function effectively with people from cultures other than one’s own. Although the standards include a cultural component, it is not measured in the assessment. An analysis specifically directed towards assessing intercultural competence for FFLTs could prove useful for FFLT programs.

Today, FLPs encompass much more than the ability to read, speak, write, and listen in the target-language. They now attempt to equip learners with the ability to look at different cultures through a multiple perspectives and focused on intercultural communication (National Community Identity Institute, 2003). Using this approach, institutions might prepare students to interact effectively with people from other cultures and embrace diversity by utilizing their FLPs.
Purpose

According to the National Standards of 2004, “the United States must educate students who are linguistically and culturally equipped to communicate successfully in a pluralistic American society and abroad” (as cited in Savignon & Sysoyev, 2005, p. 359). Byram & Guilherme (2000) suggested, “Foreign language-and-culture education can provide the means of decentring, and the critical cultural awareness which allows learners to reflect critically on their own society and their own values, meanings and behaviors within it” (p. 63). The purpose of this study is to examine whether an ACTFL-guided curriculum for teacher preparation impacts FFLTs’ intercultural competence.

Research Question

This study is guided by the following research question:

1. How does the ATCFL-guided curriculum for teacher preparation affect the intercultural competence of FFLTs?

Hypothesis

A hypothesis was formed to assess the research question and that was compatible with an independent samples t-test. The null hypothesis is that there is no difference in the intercultural competence of FFLTs who are exposed to the ACTFL-guided curriculum for teacher preparation, and NTFLMs.

Research Design

The research was conducted at a master’s large higher education institution (Carnegie Foundation for Advancement of Teaching, 2013) in the Midwestern United States. Each participant completed a demographic survey to document if they were seeking teacher certification, if they had studied or lived outside of the U.S., and their
country of origin. They then completed the Cross Cultural Adaptability Inventory (CCAI). The CCAI was developed to identify and measure factors in regards to intercultural effectiveness (Kelley & Meyers, 2003). An independent sample t-test was used to compare the difference in each of the four sub-dimensions (Emotional Resilience, Perceptual Acuity, Flexibility/Openness, and Personal Autonomy) of intercultural competence, and the overall intercultural competence score. Then a Spearman rank correlation coefficient was used to conduct within-group comparisons.

**Definition of Terms**

**Emotional Resilience** – the ability to cope with stress and ambiguity, try new experiences, and interact with people in unfamiliar situations (Kitsantas, 2004).

**Flexibility and Openness** – having interest in unfamiliar people and ideas, tolerance toward others and flexibility with regard to new experiences (Kitsantas, 2004).

**Foreign Language Program** – according to the Center for Applied Linguistics (2010), a foreign language is a language other than English (in the U.S.).

**Globalization** – the process of increasing interconnectedness between societies such that events have more effects on distanced people (Merriman & Nicoletti, 2008).

**Intercultural Awareness** – the “conscious understanding of the role culturally based forms, practices, and frames of understanding can have in intercultural communication, and an ability to put these conceptions into practice in a flexible and contextual manner” (Baker, 2010, p. 66); a key component of intercultural competence (Stier, 2006).
**Intercultural Competence** – the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in intercultural situations based on one’s intercultural knowledge, skills, and attitudes.” (Deardorff, 2004, p. 194)

**Intercultural Communication** – the sharing of information on different levels of awareness and control between people with different cultural backgrounds (Allwood, 1985).

**Internationalization** – an intentional response to globalization; “a broad range of intellectual and experiential activities designed to help individuals understand the global environment in which they live, communicate across borders, and acquire an understanding of the cultural, social, and political systems of other nations and the interactions between nations.” (Hayward & Siaya, 2001, p. 43)

**Perceptual Acuity** – interpersonal sensitivity and the ability to accurately perceive non-verbal cues across cultures (Kitsantas, 2004).

**Personal Autonomy** – personal identity that encompasses adherence and respect to intercultural values (Kitsantas, 2004).

**Delimitations of the Study**

This study was delimited to students seeking a major or minor in foreign language study. It specifically focused on students attending one institution and seeking a minor or major within the modern language content area because of the institution’s use of ACTFL guidelines for FFLTs. The comparison groups were chosen to investigate whether a service-oriented foreign language academic program (teacher preparation) would show greater influence in the students’ intercultural competencies than the non-teacher preparation foreign language program. Institutions that include internationalization and
global initiatives in their missions, visions, and values might use this study as a means for assessing FLP curricula that seeks to foster intercultural competence.

Limitations of the Study

This study has limitations stemming from the participants and the assessment tools used. Of the total number of students invited, a small sample of the students (N=13) completed the demographic survey and CCAI. Thirteen students may not be an exceptional representation of all foreign language students enrolled at this institution. Additionally, students self-reported data. Because the participants may have misinterpreted the questions in the demographic survey or within the CCAI, or did not answer questions honestly, the results may have been skewed. However, given the limited empirical evidence on this topic, this study adds to the literature base and might be used as a pilot for future studies.

Summary of Study

The subsequent chapters address the following components of the study: the second chapter reviews the relevant literature and theoretical frameworks, the third details the research design, the fourth chapter reports the results of the demographic survey and CCAI assessments, and fifth chapter concludes the study.
Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

This chapter entails a comprehensive review of this study’s relevant literature. The analysis begins with a dissection of the theories that guide the interpretation of intercultural competence. Next, the study addresses where the participants fit in the theoretical framework and how foreign language learning and study abroad impact intercultural development. The remaining sections convey higher education’s internationalization initiatives, how they relate to the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Language (ACTFL)-guided curricula, and how assessment of both ACTFL’s and internationalization’s objectives are performed.

Theoretical Framework

Student development theory plays a crucial role in the foundation of this study. Specifically, the works of Bennett (1986) and Kim (2008) have contributed to the development and rationale for comparing intercultural competence of non-teaching college foreign language students (NTFLM) and pre-service foreign language teachers (FFLT). Bennett’s (1986) Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) served as the foundation for the importance and rationale of this study, while Kim’s (2008) Stress-Adaptation-Growth Dynamic complemented Bennett’s work. Whereas each author’s theory possessed similarities in student development with respect to intercultural competence, their interpretations are unique; blending both theories offered a comprehensive theoretical framework for this study.

Bennett’s (1986) Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (Appendix D) is a scale that represents the stages of intercultural competence development and influenced
Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI). His model is based on a longitudinal study of educators’ experiences in intercultural communication related to teaching and training experiences for over 15 years.

The model encompasses a continuum towards intercultural sensitivity that is divided into six stages. Each stage falls into one of the two separations of the continuum: ethnocentrism or ethnorelativism. A person transitions from an ethnocentric to an ethnorelative perspective by experiencing difference. According to Bennett (1986), this happens because “cultures differ fundamentally in the way they create and maintain world views” (p. 181). The first stage, denial, stems from a lack of experiencing difference. People that fall in this category of the spectrum often live isolated from other cultures, and therefore, do not get exposed to different cultures. The next stage in the spectrum is defense; this stage often encompasses denigration and a sense of culture superiority because the person attempts to deflect a worldview that conflicts with one’s own perspective. The third stage is minimization; a person owning this perspective attempts to mask cultural differences and ideals by the notion that we are all humans or that we all hail from the same God. While someone with this stage deems cultural difference as insignificant, the acknowledgement of difference is why this stage is the last in the transition from ethnocentrism to ethnorelativism.

The first stage of ethnorelativism, acceptance, includes two different levels. The first is the acceptance of behavioral difference, which includes language and communication style. The second level is the acceptance of the difference in cultural values such as spirituality. Although this stage is vital to the development of intercultural communication (Barnlund, 1982; as cited in Bennett, 1986), little attention has been
given to the developmental process that allows such acceptance (Bennett, 1986). The idea of acceptance eventually empowers a person with the ability to act ethnorelatively. This defines the next stage of ethnorelativism, *adaptation*. The characteristics of adaptation are empathy and cultural pluralism, which imply a significant overseas experience (Bennett, 1986). The final stage of Bennett’s model is *integration*; this type of person can interpret “differences as processes, adapt to those differences, and can construe him or herself in various cultural ways” (Bennett, 1986, p. 186).

I posit that Bennett’s (1986) model is comprised of stages that are similar to the goals prescribed by the United States’ foreign language initiatives. For example, acceptance is marked by the acknowledgment of different language and communication styles. The cultural goals and objectives cited in this study relate to the overall theme of Bennett’s (1986) Model of Intercultural Sensitivity.

The Stress-Adaptation-Growth Dynamic Model is used to highlight Kim’s (2008) Theory of Acculturation and Deculturation. The framework suggests that exposure to stress (in the context of experiencing unfamiliar and challenging situations) promotes growth towards an intercultural identity, which is “an open-ended, adaptive, and transformative self-other orientation” (Kim, 2008, p. 364). Repeated exposure to stress and growth over time eventually moves a person from *stress* to *adaptation*. The time-period of recycling to stress from adaptation becomes less prolonged as the person moves from an ethnocentric to ethnorelative perspective.

**Ethnocentrism and K-12 Educators**

An ethnocentric point of view marks a significant number of K-12 educators who have not been exposed to other cultures (DeJaeghere & Cao, 2009; Mahon, 2009; Wright,
Yuen (2010) found that, “Hong-Kong-born Cantonese-speaking teachers in this study lacked interest in cultural pluralism” (p. 740) and remained in the ethnocentric stage of denial/defense. This is salient because of the effect ethnocentrism has on students relative to a teacher’s method of conducting class (Bennett, 1986). Mahon (2009) found that ethnocentric educators utilized a conflict management philosophy that avoided confrontation and inquiry when working with students of different cultures. Both studies highlight the notion that school systems implement programs to help promote development of intercultural sensitivity. Similarly, DeJaeghere and Cao (2009) found that teachers tend to fit Bennett’s (1986) ethnocentric stages before moving to an ethnorelative perspective after participating in intercultural competence professional development. In these studies, intercultural competence increased, whether the population was exposed to a different culture through immersion, or through educational programs conducted in his or her own environment.

**Exposure to Different Cultures**

Literature suggests that increasing intercultural competence can be achieved through high-impact practices that expose people to different cultures and ideas (DeJaeghere & Cao, 2009; Mahon, 2009; Williams, 2005; Wright, 2000; Yuen, 2010). Students who studied abroad for four- or more months showed significant increases in intercultural communication skills compared to students who did not study abroad (Williams, 2005). Furthermore, Yuen (2010) found a positive correlation existed between the length of time spent in another country and progression towards ethnorelativism. However, Williams (2005) also emphasized that although the overarching factor of intercultural competence growth was not related to various
demographic factors (i.e., gender, age, ethnicity), “[teachers’] intercultural communication skills seemed to proportionately reflect exposure [to people of other cultures]” (p. 369). This coincides with evidence that suggests certain intercultural initiatives also expose people to different cultures and promote intercultural awareness (Yuen, 2010). This strengthens the notion that repeated and continual exposure to different cultures promotes intercultural competence.

Studies show that both teachers who participated in professional development programs with a focus on intercultural competence development and high school students who were introduced to a foreign language curriculum that emphasized a cultural context demonstrated significant gains in intercultural awareness (DeJaeghere & Cao, 2009; Wright, 2000). These programs are different than immersion programs because intercultural training is “delivered” to learners, rather than learners being exposed to a new environment. The results of these two programs suggest that although the format of a program may differ substantially, exposure to different cultures encourages growth in intercultural competence regardless of implementation technique.

**Internationalization Initiatives**

Hayward and Sia (2001) define internationalization as the:

> Broad range of intellectual and experiential activities designed to help individuals understand the global environment in which they live, communicate across borders, and acquire an understanding of the cultural, social, and political systems of other nations and the interactions between nations.” (p. 43)

The philosophy and integration of internationalization programs continue to gain attention in U.S. higher education (Altbach & Knight, 2007). Historically, higher
education has been slow to adapt and restructure university strategic plans to incorporate an internationalization initiative. According to Stohl (2007), the American higher education system has failed to meet the challenges and opportunities of globalization; the U.S. also performs inadequately on practically all indicators of international knowledge, awareness and competence.

Today, institutions are beginning to embrace the fact that globalization is a major influence and are adapting to its influence. For example, Deardorff (2006) conducted a study of institutions across the United States that surveyed how internationalization was being integrated into the school’s mission, strategic plan, and/or curriculum. She found that most institutions created an internationalization task force comprised of faculty and student affairs administrators to facilitate internationalization goals. Together, the teams worked to implement global learning goals into the academic curriculum and introduce global programming outside of the classroom.

The National Security Education Program (NSEP) was created after the Cold War with the purpose of furthering international education to mobilize for internationalization (Stohl, 2007). According to Kuenzi and Riddle (2005), the NSEP supports “studying languages, cultures and world regions that are critical to U.S. interests” (p.1). Scholars such as Baxter Magolda and King (2005), Byram and Guilherme (2000), Deardorff (2006), and Kim (2008) agree that foreign language proficiency is a component of internationalization and encourages the development of intercultural competence. In effect, internationalization initiatives suggest that developing foreign language proficiency is necessary to address the needs of a globalizing market and economy (Altbach & Knight, 2007; CIA, 2010; Panetta, 1999). If U.S. higher education is to
produce leaders with the ability to operate in a modern world, institutions must focus on developing intercultural competence to engage students in a global society (Kienle & Loyd, 2005).

Countries such as China and nations within Western Europe have realized the importance of developing intercultural competence and have begun assessing how different content areas in K-12 education impact the development of global learning (Hismanoglu, 2010, Jiaquan, 2009, Wright, 2000). Additionally, Chinese “foreign language education researchers and teachers in Chinese colleges have gradually come to realize [that] the significance [of] foreign language teaching must be closely incorporated with cultural teaching and the development of intercultural competence” (Jiaquan, 2009, p. 28). Furthermore, the European Union has called for an extension of cultural pluralism by incorporating foreign-language-and-cultural learning because it instigates intercultural competence and exposes people to diverse global perspectives (Rifkin, 2005).

**Foreign Language Education in the United States**

Kienle and Loyd’s (2005) analysis of U.S. higher education highlighted the lack of attention the education system has dedicated towards addressing the impact of globalization. Leon Panetta (1999) adds to this analysis by emphasizing the necessity of learning a second language:

For the United States to get to where it needs to be will require a national commitment to strengthening America’s foreign language proficiency. A significant cultural change needs to occur. And that requires a transformation in attitude from everyone involved: individuals, government, schools and universities. (as cited in CIA, 2010, para. 1)
Higher education institutions can play an integral role in extending foreign language curricula beyond reading and writing by incorporating a multi-cultural component. Panetta (1999) further declared that “Language is a window through which we come to know other peoples and cultures” (as cited in CIA, 2010, para. 4). Foreign language skills are vital to success in an interconnected world, fundamental to US competitiveness (CIA, 2010), and help provide the tools to navigate a global society and interact with other cultures (Hismanoglu, 2011; Kramsch, 2005; Kubota, 2003).

With the ongoing pressure to promote better modern language instruction, professional organizations such as ACTFL have been created to ensure that teachers are not only focusing on traditional language study goals, but multiple components that support a holistic understanding. The Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century provides the framework for implementing and assessing foreign language teaching with five major components designated as the 5 Cs: Communication, Communities, Comparisons, Cultures and Connections (ACTFL, 2012). The second of the Cs is a cultural component. It focuses on a student’s ability to expand their knowledge and understanding by demonstrating comprehension in the relationship between practice and perspectives, and between products and perspectives (ACTFL, 2012). The third C, connections, includes the learner’s recognition of the distinct perspectives that are only accessible through language and its respective cultures. Koning (2010) supported this ideal by suggesting that foreign language study functions as an instrument to investigate cultural perspectives in a way that is dissimilar to any other academic programs. The fourth C, comparisons, is the final piece that makes up the underlying objective of promoting intercultural competence. Comparisons provide
educators with a guide to develop students understanding by linking language and culture to their own (ACTFL, 2012). Additionally, the comparisons component ties the 5 Cs to Bennett’s (1986) ethnocentric component by focusing on a learner’s own culture and relating it to unfamiliar cultures.

ACTFL uses the Oral Proficiency Interview as instrument to measure a learner’s ability to speak the target language (Language Testing International, 2012). However, this tool does not include a method of assessing all of the components highlighted within the scrutiny of the 5 Cs. Essentially, it does not assess the intercultural competence component that is underscored throughout the Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century’s (2012) framework. However, intercultural assessment tools do exist.

Assessment Tools

Assessment instruments related to development of intercultural competence, specifically the Cross-Cultural Adaptability Inventory (CCAI) and the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI), share many characteristics. Both the CCAI and IDI are used and trusted to assess intercultural competence in multiple contexts. The CCAI measured change in intercultural communication development among college students that have studied abroad (Williams, 2005), as well as compare foreign language instructional techniques in beginner German language courses (Wright, 2000).

In Yuen’s (2010) study of intercultural sensitivity, the IDI was administered to secondary education language teachers from multiple foreign-language teaching backgrounds. The results of IDI were used to help schools promote intercultural sensitivity and shed light on the current stage of development according to Bennett’s
(1986) DMIS (Yuen, 2010). The IDI was also used to survey foreign language teachers in Hong Kong (Yuen, 2010), educators in a Midwestern U.S. urban school district (DeJaeghere & Cao, 2009), and teachers in predominantly non-White schools (Mahon, 2009). The use of the CCAI and IDI shows the versatility of each instrument and suggests external validity of both tools. Ultimately, both the CCAI and IDI proved useful in measuring intercultural competence.

**Conclusion**

Empirical data suggest a relationship between exposure to other cultures and the development of intercultural competence. Research also suggests that both immersion and formal programs can promote intercultural awareness (DeJaeghere & Cao, 2005; Mahon, 2009; Wright 2000; Yuen, 2010).

This study examines intercultural competence among foreign language students enrolled at a higher education institution. Specifically, the demographic survey was used to distinguish and compare FFLTs to NTFLMs, and FFLTs to students who either studied abroad or lived abroad. The sample population in this study exhibited characteristics similar to those cited in the literature: foreign language students (Williams, 2005; Wright, 2000) and foreign language teachers (DeJaeghere & Cao, 2009; Mahon, 2009; Wright, 2000; Yuen, 2010). In the United States, foreign language teachers are encouraged to promote cultural learning (ACTFL, 1999, 2012; Modern Language Association, 2007), and scholars agree that learning a foreign language is a crucial component in developing intercultural competence (Bennett, 1999; Baxter Magolda & King, 2005; Deardorff, 2006; Kim, 2008). The CCAI was used to measure each participant’s cross-culture
adaptability and intercultural competence in relation to their higher education FLP experience.
Chapter 3: Research Design

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to explore if a difference existed between the intercultural competence of future foreign language teachers (FFLT) and non-teaching foreign language majors and minors (NTFLM). This study is guided by the following research question:

1. How does the ACTFL-guided curriculum for teacher preparation affect the intercultural competence of FFLTs?

The null hypothesis is that there is no difference in intercultural competence for x and y. The alternative hypothesis is that there is a difference in intercultural competence for x and y. This chapter describes the methodology used in this study to gather and analyze data pertaining to the intercultural competence that may be gained from foreign language study comparing two curricula (pre-service teaching component and non-teaching component), study abroad as a high-impact practice, and living abroad.

Participants

The participants in this study were college students seeking a major and or minor in a foreign language, some of whom were pre-service foreign language teachers, at a master’s large university in the Midwestern United States. There are approximately 25,000 students enrolled at the institution, with over 200 areas of study. The institution’s modern language department includes Arabic, Chinese, French, German, and Spanish and had over 1,000 students pursuing a major or minor in a foreign language. The university had a small population of secondary student teachers practicing foreign language instruction. There were a total of 13 students studying a foreign language represented in
this study; seven were completing their first semester of student teaching (ACTFL-guided curriculum for teacher preparation); six were not pursuing teacher certification (general FLP curricula). Additionally, seven students participated in faculty- or teacher-led study abroad programs, and two self-reported living in another country.

**Instrumentation**

The Cross Cultural Adaptability Inventory (CCAI) was developed to help identify and assess factors that influence cross-cultural communication (Kelley & Meyers, 2003). Vangent, Inc. owns the rights to the CCAI, and permission to use copyrighted materials is attached (Appendix C). The CCAI comprised of 50 randomly ordered questions, and grouped in four different dimensions: Emotional Resilience, Perceptual Acuity, Flexibility/Openness, and Personal Autonomy (Kelley & Meyers, 2003). The Emotional Resilience dimension measures the ability to hold poise and react positively to new experiences on a scale of 0 to 108. The Flexibility/Openness dimension measures a person’s enjoyment of thinking and interacting in a cross-cultural experience on a scale of 0 to 90. The Perceptual Acuity dimension measures to what extent a person perceives different aspects of the environment on a scale of 0 to 70. The Personal Autonomy dimension measures to what extent a personal system of values and beliefs has been developed and how much the person respects others values and beliefs on a scale of 0 to 42.

The data were compiled and analyzed in each of the four separate dimensions, as well as using the participants’ composite scores. The CCAI has been used by scholars to assess intercultural competence in FLPs using each dimension and its composite score (Williams, 2005; Wright, 2000).
For the purpose of this study, the participants’ CCAI data will be measured and compared using the information collected from the demographic survey (Appendix A). This survey was created by the primary researcher, reviewed by the thesis advisor and committee, and approved by the university’s institutional review board. This demographic survey comprised of five questions and guided the following research sub-questions:

1.1 Is there a difference in the intercultural competence of FFLTs and NTFLMs?
1.2 Is there a difference in the intercultural competence of FFLTs and foreign language students who have studied abroad (SA)?
1.3 Is there a difference in the intercultural competence of FFLTs and foreign language students who have lived abroad?

Data Collection and Analysis

All foreign language majors and minors were invited to participate in this research study via email two weeks before the assessment was conducted. The invitation detailed the time and location of where the demographic survey and CCAI would be completed, Institutional Review Board’s (IRB) approval, confidentiality (see Appendix D), and contact information for both the researcher and thesis advisor. The students who agreed to participate by responding to the study invitation were then sent a follow-up email the following week. The follow-up email detailed the location for the assessment to ensure only the participants who agreed to partake via email would be present.

Participants pursuing teacher certification were invited to complete the survey during one of their regular class sessions. The pre-service teachers were sent the same
information as detailed above, and the participants who missed or could not attend the first seminar were invited to attend this session.

The completed demographic surveys and CCAI inventories were entered into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet and coded to be compatible with Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software. The participants’ responses were compared using the demographic survey results as independent variables and the CCAI score results (separate dimensions and composite) as dependent variables. The composite scores were then visually inspected to confirm normality using a Q-Q plot. An independent samples t-test was used to compare the difference in each of the four sub-dimensions (Emotional Resilience, Perceptual Acuity, Flexibility/Openness, and Personal Autonomy) of intercultural competence, and the overall intercultural competence score. A Spearman rank correlation coefficient (Spearman measure) was used to conduct within-group comparisons. The Spearman measure is a non-parametric measure of statistical correlation between two variables. In this study, the variables were separate dimensions and the composite score of the CCAI for one group (i.e., all SA students).

Summary

This study was designed to analyze the intercultural competence of FFLTs. The demographic survey responses were paired with the CCAI scores because of the CCAI’s reliability and previous implementations for similar study (Kelley and Meyers, 2003; Williams, 2005; Wright, 2000). The analysis of this data aimed to identify whether differences exist between FFLTs and NTFLMs.
Chapter Four: Results

Introduction

This section highlights the results and analysis of the participant’s Cross-Cultural Adaptability Inventory (CCAI). The chapter begins by providing descriptive statistics about the participants’ scores. Then, the research findings are presented and followed by a summary of the analysis.

Context

Approximately 1,000 foreign language student majors and minors were invited to participate in the study. Thirteen of these students attended the assessment sessions. Of the foreign language students who participated, seven were completing their first semester of student teaching and six were foreign language students not seeking a teaching certificate. Of the thirteen participants, nine of the students had studied or lived outside of the United States: seven participated in faculty- or teacher-led study abroad programs and two participants reported living out of country at some point.

Findings

The analysis of the data collected was reported for Future Foreign Language Teachers (FFLT) and Non-Teaching Foreign Language Majors and Minors (NTFLM), students who studied abroad (SA), and students who lived abroad (LA) across five different categories. The five categories include each of the four dimensions: Emotional Resilience (ER), Flexibility/Openness (FO), Perceptual Acuity (PA), and Personal Autonomy (PAT), and the Composite Score (CS) of the CCAI. The mean, median and standard deviation were calculated to provide descriptive statistics. Due to the size of the sample (N=2), students who had lived abroad (LA) were not analyzed using any other
measures. The composite scores were visually inspected to confirm normality using a Q-Q plot. Then, using the data from each CCAI dimension and the CS, an independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare the intercultural competence of FFLTs to NTFLMs, and FFLTs to SA students. Finally, the data was analyzed using a Spearman rank-order correlation coefficient (Spearman measure denoted as Spearman rho, ρ) to determine statistically significant correlations within groups (i.e., included only students who studied abroad). Each dimension and the CS signify a separate independent variable for the purpose of this study.

**Descriptive Statistics**

Descriptive statistics were calculated and reported for FFLTs, NTFLMs, SA students, and LA students using the mean, median and standard deviation. The statistical summary is presented in Table 1.
Table 1

*Descriptive Statistics of Independent Variables*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimensions</th>
<th>ER</th>
<th>FO</th>
<th>PA</th>
<th>PAT</th>
<th>CS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>FFLT (N=7)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>79.00</td>
<td>68.57</td>
<td>47.86</td>
<td>35.43</td>
<td>230.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median</td>
<td>82.00</td>
<td>69.00</td>
<td>47.00</td>
<td>35.00</td>
<td>231.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NTFLM (N=6)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>83.00</td>
<td>74.17</td>
<td>47.33</td>
<td>33.67</td>
<td>238.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median</td>
<td>83.50</td>
<td>74.00</td>
<td>48.00</td>
<td>33.50</td>
<td>240.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SA (N=7)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>81.43</td>
<td>71.00</td>
<td>47.57</td>
<td>36.14</td>
<td>236.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Dev.</td>
<td>10.064</td>
<td>6.083</td>
<td>3.780</td>
<td>2.968</td>
<td>21.326</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median</td>
<td>82.00</td>
<td>73.00</td>
<td>47.00</td>
<td>36.00</td>
<td>231.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LA (N = 2)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>73.5</td>
<td>68.00</td>
<td>47.00</td>
<td>34.50</td>
<td>223</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Dev.</td>
<td>21.92</td>
<td>16.97</td>
<td>4.242</td>
<td>0.707</td>
<td>43.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Std. Dev</td>
<td>73.5</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>34.5</td>
<td>223</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Test for Normality**

The composite scores were visually inspected using a Q-Q plot to determine normality. The Q-Q plot is presented in Table 2.
The results of the Q-Q plot visual inspection indicated a normal distribution of the participants’ composite scores.

**Independent Samples T-Test**

An independent samples t-test was used to investigate intercultural competence in FFLT and NTFLMs, and FFLT and SA students. The independent samples t-test was used to test for statistical significance between each of the four dimensions and the CS. Each analysis was conducted using Microsoft Excel at a confidence interval of 95 percent (α=0.05) and with equal variances.
Research Question 1.1 – Is there a difference in the intercultural competence of FFLTs and NTFLMs?

An independent samples t-test was conducted to investigate the intercultural competence of FFLTs and NTFLMs. The statistical summary is presented in Table 3.

Table 3

*Independent Samples T-Test of FFLTs and NTFLMs (df=13)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimensions</th>
<th>ER</th>
<th>FO</th>
<th>PA</th>
<th>PAT</th>
<th>CS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Foreign Language Students</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>t</td>
<td>-0.68</td>
<td>-1.47</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>0.99</td>
<td>-0.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p*</td>
<td>0.51</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>0.56</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*two-tailed

The results of the independent t-test indicated that there was neither significant difference in the overall intercultural competence of FFLTs and NTFLMs nor their components.

Research Question 1.2 – Is there a difference in the intercultural competence of FFLTs and SA students?

An independent samples t-test was conducted to investigate the intercultural competence of FFLTs and SA students. The statistical summary is presented in Table 4.
Table 4

*Independent Samples T-Test of FFLTs and SA Students (df=12)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimensions</th>
<th>ER</th>
<th>FO</th>
<th>PA</th>
<th>PAT</th>
<th>CS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Foreign Language Students</td>
<td>$t$</td>
<td>-0.39</td>
<td>-0.62</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>-0.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$p^*$</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>0.54</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td>0.69</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*two-tailed

The results of the independent $t$-test indicated that there was neither significant difference in the overall intercultural competence of FFLTs and SA students nor their components.

**Spearman Measure**

A Spearman measure was conducted for each sub-group using SPSS, to investigate relationships within groups (i.e., includes only the results of FFLTs) using the four dimensions and CS of the CCAI. A Spearman measure denoted statistically significant correlations at both a two-tailed level of $p = .05$ and $p = .01$.

A Spearman Measure was first conducted to determine within group correlations for the seven FFLTs’ four dimensions and the CS. There were nine statistically significant correlations between the five variables. The statistical summary is presented in Table 5.
Table 5

Spearman Measure of FFLTs (df=4)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>ER</th>
<th>FO</th>
<th>PA</th>
<th>PAT</th>
<th>CS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ER</strong></td>
<td>ρ</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.006</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>.010</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FO</strong></td>
<td>ρ</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.901**</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.847*</td>
<td>.631</td>
<td>.929**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.006</td>
<td>.016</td>
<td>.129</td>
<td>.003</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PA</strong></td>
<td>ρ</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.945**</td>
<td>.847*</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.918**</td>
<td>.919**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>.016</td>
<td>.004</td>
<td>.003</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PAT</strong></td>
<td>ρ</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.873*</td>
<td>.631</td>
<td>.918**</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.829*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.010</td>
<td>.129</td>
<td>.004</td>
<td>.021</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CS</strong></td>
<td>ρ</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.991**</td>
<td>.929**</td>
<td>.919**</td>
<td>.829*</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.003</td>
<td>.003</td>
<td>.021</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

ER and PA showed a positive correlation with all other variables. Specifically, ER showed a positive correlation with FO, which was statistically significant ($\rho (5) = .901$, $p = .006$). ER showed a positive correlation with PA, which was statistically significant ($\rho (5) = .945$, $p = .001$). ER showed a positive correlation with PAT, which was statistically significant ($\rho (5) = .873$, $p = .010$). ER showed a positive correlation with CS, which was statistically significant ($\rho (5) = .991$, $p = .000$). PA showed a positive correlation with FO, which was statistically significant ($\rho (5) = .847$, $p = .001$). PA showed a positive correlation with PAT, which was statistically significant ($\rho (5) = .918$, $p = .004$). PA showed a positive correlation with CS, which was statistically
significant ($\rho (5) = .919, p = .003$). There were also correlations for FO and CS, and PAT and CS. Specifically, FO showed a positive correlation with CS, which was statistically significant ($\rho (5) = .929, p = .003$) and PAT with CS, which was statistically significant ($\rho (5) = .829, p = .021$).

A Spearman Measure was then conducted to determine within group correlations for the six NTFLM’s four dimensions of the CCAI as well as the CS. There were two positive correlations between the five variables. The statistical summary is presented in Table 6.

Table 6

*Spearman Measure of NTFLMs (df=4)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Dimensions</th>
<th>ER</th>
<th>FO</th>
<th>PA</th>
<th>PAT</th>
<th>CS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ER</td>
<td>$\rho$</td>
<td></td>
<td>.698</td>
<td>.618</td>
<td>.600</td>
<td>.943**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.123</td>
<td>.191</td>
<td>.208</td>
<td>.005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FO</td>
<td>$\rho$</td>
<td>.698</td>
<td></td>
<td>.375</td>
<td>.577</td>
<td>.820*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td></td>
<td>.123</td>
<td></td>
<td>.464</td>
<td>.231</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PA</td>
<td>$\rho$</td>
<td>.618</td>
<td>.375</td>
<td></td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.618</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.191</td>
<td>.464</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAT</td>
<td>$\rho$</td>
<td>.600</td>
<td>.577</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
<td>.714</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.208</td>
<td>.231</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS</td>
<td>$\rho$</td>
<td>.943**</td>
<td>.820*</td>
<td>.618</td>
<td>.714</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.005</td>
<td>.046</td>
<td>.191</td>
<td>.111</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
ER showed a positive correlation with CS, which was statistically significant ($\rho (4) = .943, p = .005$). FO showed a positive correlation with CS, which was statistically significant ($\rho (4) = .820, p = .046$).

Lastly, a Spearman measure was conducted to investigate correlation between each of the four dimensions of the CCAI as well as the CS for the SA students. Again p-value of 0.05 and 0.01 denoted significant correlations. There were seven positive correlations between the five variables. The statistical summary is presented in Table 7.

Table 7

*Spearman Measures of SA students (df=5)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ER</th>
<th>FO</th>
<th>PA</th>
<th>PAT</th>
<th>CS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$\rho$</td>
<td>.714</td>
<td>.946**</td>
<td>.955**</td>
<td>1.000**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.071</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FO</th>
<th>ER</th>
<th>.714</th>
<th>.564</th>
<th>.793*</th>
<th>.714</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$\rho$</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.564</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.844*</td>
<td>.946**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.071</td>
<td>.187</td>
<td>.033</td>
<td>.071</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PA</th>
<th>ER</th>
<th>.946**</th>
<th>.564</th>
<th>-</th>
<th>.844*</th>
<th>.946**</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$\rho$</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>.187</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.017</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PAT</th>
<th>ER</th>
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<th>.793*</th>
<th>.844*</th>
<th>-</th>
<th>.955**</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$\rho$</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>.033</td>
<td>.017</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CS</th>
<th>ER</th>
<th>.1000**</th>
<th>.946**</th>
<th>.955**</th>
<th>-</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$\rho$</td>
<td></td>
<td>.714</td>
<td>.946**</td>
<td>.955**</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.071</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
Notably, the PAT dimension showed a positive correlation with all other variables. Specifically, PAT showed a positive correlation with ER, which was statistically significant ($\rho (5) = .955, p = .001$). PAT showed a positive correlation with FO, which was statistically significant ($\rho (5) = .793, p = .033$). PAT showed a positive correlation with PA, which was statistically significant ($\rho (5) = .844, p = .017$). PAT showed a positive correlation with CS, which was statistically significant ($\rho (5) = .955, p = .001$).

There were also positive correlations for CS and ER, CS and PA, CS and PAT, and FO and PA. CS showed a positive correlation ER, which was statistically significant ($\rho (5) = 1.000 p = .000$); with PA, which was statistically significant ($\rho (5) = .946, p = .001$); and with PAT, which was statistically significant ($\rho (5) = .955, p = .001$). FO showed a positive correlation with PA, which was statistically significant ($\rho (5) = .793, p = .033$).

**Summary**

The results of the CCAI were coded and analyzed using descriptive statistics, an independent samples t-test, and a Spearman measure. The descriptive statistics included the mean, median, and standard deviation of the four dimensions and CS of the CCAI and were reported for three groups: FFLTs, NTFLMs, and SA students. An independent samples t-test was conducted to analyze the intercultural competence of FFLTs and NTFLMs, and FFLTs and SA students. The results indicated that there was no significant difference in the four dimensions and the CS for each comparison group.

A Spearman measure was used to determine within-group correlations using the four dimensions and the CS of the CCAI. There were a total of ten possible correlations
for the within-group comparisons using the Spearman measure. The analysis revealed that the FFLTs produced the most statistically significant correlations, with nine positive correlations, within the CCAI. Notably, the ER dimension showed a positive correlation with the three other dimensions and the CS. The CS showed a positive correlation with all four dimensions. The SA students showed the second most statistically significant correlations with seven of ten possible correlations being statistically significant. The analysis showed that the PAT dimension of the SA students positively correlated with all other dimensions of the CCAI, including the CS. The SA student’s CS was also positively correlated with three of the four dimensions (ER, PA, PAT). The NTFLMs showed two positive correlations within the intercultural competence inventory (ER, FO). The implications and impact of these results will be discussed in further detail in Chapter 5.
Chapter 5: Conclusion

Summary of Study

This study was conducted to address the lack of research pertaining to foreign language programs’ (FLPs) impact on intercultural competence. The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Language (ACTFL) developed a framework to guide foreign language instructors in implementing a curriculum with intercultural components. However, the scope of relevant literature assessing ACTFL’s intercultural outcomes remains elusive. This study surveyed thirteen foreign language students studying at a higher education institution in the Midwestern United States. Its purpose was to examine whether there was a difference in the intercultural competence among 1) future K-12 foreign language teachers (FFLTs) in an ACTFL-guided curriculum for teacher preparation and non-teacher-track foreign language majors and minors (NTFLMs), 2) FFLTs and students who studied abroad (SA), and 3) FFLTs and students who lived abroad (LA).

Each participant’s intercultural competence was measured using the Cross-Cultural Adaptability Inventory (CCAI). The results were separated into four groups (FFLTs, NTFLMs, Study Abroad [SA] students, and students who lived abroad [LA]) and analyzed within each of the CCAI’s four dimensions (Emotional Resilience [ER], Flexibility/Openness [FO], Perceptual Acuity [PA], and Personal Autonomy [PAT]), and the composite score (CS). An independent samples t-test reported no statistically significant difference in the intercultural competence of FFLTs in comparison to NTFLMs and SA students (LA was not included in the analysis because of a small sample size). A Spearman measure was then conducted for each group to investigate whether any correlations existed within the four dimensions and CS of the CCAI. The
analysis revealed that nine positive correlations existed for FFLTs, two positive correlations existed for NTFLMs, and seven positive correlations existed for SA students.

**Conclusion**

The results of the CCAI conveyed a higher level of intercultural competence in NTFLMs than FFLTs and SA students. This was apparent not only in the CS, but the dimensions as well. However, due to the small sample size, speculation as to why this was apparent could be inaccurate and warranted additional attention. Further analysis of the three groups’ data found that the variations in intercultural competence were not statistically significant. Based on these findings, I posit that regardless of whether a foreign language student completed an ACTFL-guided pre-service teaching component, or studied abroad, they will exhibit similar levels of intercultural competence. However, it should be noted that the number of participants in this study was not an accurate representation of the population, and may mistakenly portray the indifference of intercultural competence among FFLTs and NTFLMs.

The Spearman measure data revealed variations in the number and strength of correlations within each group’s intercultural competence. While each group’s analysis conveyed no negative correlations for any of the dimensions, the number of statistically significant, positive correlations differed considerably. Notably, FFLTs had significant positive correlations within all possible permutations of intercultural competence except PA. Specifically, FFLT’s dimensions were more likely to correlate with each other than the other two groups. Perhaps this may indicate that the pre-service component of the FLP curriculum impacted how FFLT’s dimensions of intercultural competence interconnect. Since any change within an individual component of intercultural
competence was correlated with all of the other components for FFTL’s in the study, the overall competence of a FFLT included in the study can be improved by stimulating any particular dimension.

It may also be valuable to note that several positive, statistically significant correlations existed in the analysis of students who had participated in study abroad (SA). Particularly, SA students’ ER had a stronger positive correlation with PA and PAT than the other groups of students. Similar to the FFLTs, SA students’ intercultural competence dimensions seemed to cohesively impact each other. The NTFLMs possessed the least number of correlations indicating that an intercultural learning experience inciting growth in one dimension does not warrant a similar effect on another.

Although the FFLTs, NTFLMs and SA students appeared to exhibit no significant difference in the four dimensions, or their overall intercultural competence, the correlations within the dimensions of the three groups cannot be ignored. Due to the small sample size and findings, a more in depth look at the conclusions could address how an ACTFL-guided curriculum for teacher preparation influences intercultural competence and the interrelatedness of the CCAI dimensions.

**Discussion**

The question of whether an ACTFL-guided curriculum for teacher preparation affects the intercultural competence of FFLTs was not fully addressed by the findings of this study because of the small sample size. However, the FFLTs appeared to have less intercultural competence, than both the SA students and the NTFLMs. Based on ACTFL’s relation to the theoretical framework and dimensions of the CCAI, FFLT’s should at the least have exhibited the same scores even in this small scale study. Notably,
the *communities* component ties the 5 Cs together; enabling the learner to interact in global situations contextually and in culturally appropriate ways (ACTFL, 2012), while the ER dimension measures the ability to interact with people (Kitsantas, 2004). However, regardless of this connection, the FFLTs still exhibited a lower ER, and overall intercultural competence than the other groups of students and this finding should be further explored.

The analysis of the within-group correlations indicated that variations existed among FFLT’s, NTFLM’s, and SA student’s intercultural competence. While the NTFLM’s dimensions were not as interrelated, the FFLT’s interconnected cohesively. Therefore, it appears that some independent variable influenced the students who participated in the ACTFL-guided curriculum for teacher preparation. For example, based on this study, FFLT’s development can be encouraged by stimulating any dimension, but a NTFLM’s FO is the only dimension that correlates with the overall intercultural competence. Perhaps, the 5 Cs interconnected framework and intercultural goals encouraged cohesion within the four dimensions. In effect, instigating an intercultural learning experience to these participants may have a more comprehensive impact on the FFLTs than NTFLMs. Further study to support this finding and elaborate on these trends may still be necessary due to small sample size.

Findings from the analysis of SA students complemented the current literature by highlighting the impact of study abroad on ER. The comprehensive examination of the SA student’s intercultural competence illustrated the greatest number of statistically significant positive correlations within the ER dimension. This suggests that if an intercultural stimulus was introduced to a study abroad student included in this study,
their ER component would effectively influence the other dimensions. Likewise, the FFLT’s ER also impacts their overall intercultural competence. This trend may occur because all of the FFLTs had studied abroad or had a living abroad experience, thus they would predictably exhibit similar correlations to the SA students. However, this assumption is challenged by the data indicating that SA students had a greater ER than the FFLTs. This finding presents implications for further study to address whether this was a reflection of the small sample size, or if the ACTFL-guided curriculum for teacher preparation actually decreased ER.

Pieces of this study’s findings appear to conflict with student development theory. The FFLT’s exhibited a lower PAT scores and less significant correlations between PAT and the other dimensions. PAT, in regards to the CCAI is defined as personal identity that encompasses adherence and respect to intercultural values (Kitsantas, 2004). And since all of the FFLTs have been exposed to stress through a combination of experience abroad, learning a foreign language, and conducting a classroom over a period of time, Kim’s (2008) Stress-Adaptation-Growth-Dynamic speculates that FFLTs would be more “oriented to oneself and a world that is more open, flexible, and inclusive” (p. 366). I expected that FFLTs would have exhibited a greater intercultural competence in the PAT dimension. However, this discrepancy may be due to the small sample size or misinterpretation of the questions used to score the PA dimension of the CCAI. Analysis of the CCAI dimensions and their relation to intercultural development theory may further explain this disparity.

The literature indicated that foreign language acquisition, regardless of its structure and capacity, affects intercultural competence. However, scholars do not
understand precisely what role it plays. This study aimed to address that lack of research by examining whether an ACTFL-guided component for teacher preparation (FFLTs) played a role in developing intercultural competence. Although the findings may have shown a slight disparity in the groups’ intercultural competence, it was difficult to distinguish whether the FFLTs were impacted by their study/living abroad experiences, the curriculum itself, a combination of the two, or other variables that were not controlled in the study. Additionally, the lower scores for FFLT’s intercultural competence may have been a result of the small sample size. In addition, the NTFLMs may have been exposed to an ACTFL-guided curriculum for teacher preparation within their own respective course of study, had intercultural experiences outside of the FLP, or some other combinations of variables.

However, the variations and correlations presented in the analysis associated with these experiences cannot be overlooked. Further research and a more comprehensive study highlighting the effects of foreign language learning on intercultural competence should be conducted to address the findings and speculations in this study.

Recommendations

For Practice

Implications for higher education and foreign language practitioners include:

1. Continuously measuring intercultural competence within ACTFL and general foreign language curricula, along with high-impact cultural experiences could help practitioners make research-based decisions on which types of learning experiences may be most beneficial for learners.
2. SA students from this study would benefit by being introduced to situations that require ER because of the impact it had on the other dimensions and overall intercultural competence. Challenging SA students, or all students, to immerse themselves in unfamiliar situations may stimulate intercultural growth.

3. The FFLT’s intercultural competence growth may be stimulated by exposure to almost any particular dimension. Imaginably, higher education professionals could structure programs and professional development to address the different dimensions of intercultural competence and promote a holistic intercultural learning experience.

For Further Research

Questions and areas of further research raised by this study include:

1. Because of the small sample size, further research using a similar design may provide more statistically significant data and reveal stronger conclusions.

2. Is there a significant difference in intercultural competence of FFLTs who did not study abroad with FFLTs who have studied abroad? Research addressing this question could provide more insight as to whether the study abroad experience or FLP’s ACTFL-guided teaching component of the curriculum had a greater impact on intercultural competence.

3. Does foreign language learning in general promote intercultural competence? Assessing the intercultural competence of students studying foreign languages and who do not study foreign language would support or the literature citing scholars who believe that FLPs play a role in developing intercultural competence.
4. Surveying intercultural competence within different levels of the curricula (i.e., 300-level course work) may provide insight as to where students’ scores fall on the CCAI’s scoring scales. Correlating the level of coursework with the level of intercultural competence may provide rationale for revising curricula and pedagogy to accommodate students’ different levels of development.

5. Does foreign language study promote intercultural competence at other institutions or outside of higher education? A similar research design using K-12 students as participants could add to the existing knowledge base and advocate for foreign language study.

6. How does intercultural competence development compare with other student development theories? Assessing intercultural competence longitudinally and comparing it to student development theory may offer insight as to how practitioners can implement effective intercultural experiences.
References


Panetta, L. E. (1999). *Foreign language education: If ‘scandalous’ in the 20th century, what will it be in the 21st century?* Retrieved from Grand Valley State University website: [http://mybb.gvsu.edu/webapps/portal/frameset.jsp?tab_tab_group_id=_13_1&url=%2Fwebapps%2Fblackboard%2Fexecute%2Flauncher%3Ftype%3DCourse%26id%3D_53353_1%26url%3D](http://mybb.gvsu.edu/webapps/portal/frameset.jsp?tab_tab_group_id=_13_1&url=%2Fwebapps%2Fblackboard%2Fexecute%2Flauncher%3Ftype%3DCourse%26id%3D_53353_1%26url%3D)


Appendix A

1. Do you plan on applying for teaching certification?
   a. Yes
   b. No

2. Amount of time participated in a faculty or teacher-led study abroad program before?
   a. Never
   b. Less than 3 months
   c. 3-6 months
   d. 7-11 months
   e. 1-2 years
   f. 3-5 years
   g. 6-10 years
   h. Over 10 years

3. If yes (to question 2), which region of the world?
   a. North America
   b. Central America
   c. South America
   d. Africa
   e. Asia
   f. Western Europe
   g. Eastern Europe
   h. Australia
   i. Asia Pacific
   j. Middle East
   k. Other

4. Amount of time living in another country (not including study abroad)?
   a. Never
   b. Less than 3 months
   c. 3-6 months
   d. 7-11 months
   e. 1-2 years
   f. 3-5 years
   g. 6-10 years
   h. Over 10 years

5. If yes (to question 4), which region of the world?
   a. North America
   b. Central America
   c. South America
   d. Africa
   e. Asia
   f. Western Europe
   g. Eastern Europe
   h. Australia
   i. Asia Pacific
   j. Middle East
   k. Other
## CCAI ™
Cross Cultural Adaptability Inventory
Colleen Kelley, PhD
Judith Meyers, PsyD

## ITEM LEVEL REPORT

**Legend:**
- DT = Definitely True
- T = True
- TT = Tends to Be True
- TNT = Tends to Be Not True
- NT = Not True
- DNT = Definitely Not True

### Emotional Resilience

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item Number/Item*</th>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I have ways to deal with the stresses of new situations.</td>
<td>DT</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I feel confident in my ability to cope with life, no matter where I am.</td>
<td>DT</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. I like to try new things.</td>
<td>DT</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Copyright protection extends but is not limited to prohibition against copying, reproducing or modifying these materials without the prior written consent of Vangent, Inc., USA.
9. I have a realistic perception of how others see me.  

15. I am the kind of person who gives people who are different from me the benefit of the doubt.  

28. I pay attention to how people's cultural differences affect their perceptions of me.  

Personal Autonomy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item Number/Item*</th>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6. I believe that I can accomplish what I set out to do, even in unfamiliar settings.</td>
<td>DT</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. I believe that all people, of whatever race, are equally valuable.</td>
<td>DT</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. I feel free to maintain my personal values, even among those who do not share them.</td>
<td>DT</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41. My personal value system is based on my own beliefs, not on conformity to other people's standards.</td>
<td>DT</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. If my ideas conflicted with those of others who are different from me, I would follow my ideas rather than theirs.</td>
<td>TT</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35. I prefer to decide from my own values, even when those around me have different values.</td>
<td>TT</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47. I expect that others will respect me, regardless of their cultural background.</td>
<td>TT</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Note that some items are reverse scored and are designated by an (R).
January 16, 2013

Andrew Baalerud
Learning Specialist/Graduate Assistant
Disability Support Resources
Grand Valley State University
Allendale, MI 49401
616.331.2490

Dear Mr. Baalerud,

You have successfully competed Vangent’s student research request process. You have permission to use the Cross Cultural Adaptability Inventory (CCAI) as part of your student research project with Grand Valley State University for the agreed upon price. This approval is dependent on your project being supervised by Grand Valley State University faculty. The assessment will be administered via paper-pencil booklets. The responses from the paper-pencil booklets will need to be scored within the booklet following the instructions in the booklet.

Sincerely,

Kelly Dages

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